

## Message Text

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12  
ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 EB-07

ACDA-05 IO-10 /077 W  
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R 240714Z JAN 75  
FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4901  
INFO AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON  
AMEMBASSY SAIGON  
CINCPAC  
SECDEF  
CINCPACFLT  
COMNAVELECSYSCOM  
CNO

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 0558

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: MARR, PFOR, AS, US  
SUBJ: PROSPECTS FOR OMEGA, PRG RECOGNITION AND  
OTHER ISSUES AT BIENNIAL LABOR PARTY CONFERENCE

REF: STATE 09066, CANBERRA 368 AND 526

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD, COMNAVELECSYSCOM ALSO FOR PME-119

1. SUMMARY: I DISCUSSED FORTHCOMING ALP CONFERENCE AND  
OMEGA WITH FONMIN WILLESEE TODAY. OMEGA SEEMS SURE  
TO COME UP AT ALP CONFERENCE AND IT IS QUITE POSSIBLE  
THAT LABOR PARTY WILL REJECT OMEGA PROPOSAL. PRG  
RECOGNITION WILL ALSO BE DEBATED AND WILLESEE  
ANTICIPATES WHITLAM WILL BE ABLE TO HEAD THIS OFF.  
WILLESEE SAYS THIRD FOREIGN POLICY ISSUE WILL BE  
POSSIBLE REMOVAL OF AUSTRALIAN TRADE COMMISSIONERS  
FROM SOUTH AFRICA. CENTRAL ISSUE IN CONFERENCE WILL  
BE STATE/FEDERAL RELATIONS. DISCUSSION OF DEAN/SHARMAN  
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PROBLEM REPORTED SEPTTEL. END SUMMARY

2. OMEGA. I EXPLAINED TO FONMIN WILLESEE THIS MORNING THAT DECISION ON AUSTRALIAN OMEGA STATION WAS URGENT, SINCE FURTHER DELAY WOULD JEOPARDIZE INTEGRITY OF WORLDWIDE OMEGA SYSTEM. I REVIEWED ARGUMENTS SUPPORTING AUSTRALIAN PARTICIPATION AND LEFT WITH HIM A MEMO DRAWING UPON PARA 5 STATE 9066.

3. WILLESEE SAID THAT EMOTIONAL AND RHETORICAL BIENNIAL CONFERENCE PROVIDED POOR ATMOSPHERE FOR RESOLVING TECHNICAL ISSUE SUCH AS OMEGA. REPORT OF JOINT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE, WHICH WILLESEE UNDERSTOOD TO BE GENERALLY FAVORABLE TO OMEGA, HAD NOT BEEN RELEASED. HE SURMISED DELAY WAS TO PERMIT COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN, SENATOR JOHN WHEELDON, TO SPEAK OUT AGAINST OMEGA AT BIENNIAL CONFERENCE, WHICH WHEELDON HAD DONE FORCEFULLY AT RECENT MEETING OF PREPARATORY STEERING COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENCE. WHITLAM HAD ALSO BEEN PRESENT. WILLESEE BECAME VAGUE ON WHITLAM'S OWN POSITION, ALTHOUGH HE SUGGESTED THAT PRIME MINISTER SUPPORTED OMEGA. WILLESEE ANTICIPATES THAT LABOR PARTY FEDERAL EXECUTIVE WILL RECOMMEND TO CONFERENCE THAT OMEGA ISSUE BE LEFT FOR DISCUSSION BY PARLIAMENT ON BASIS OF JOINT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE REPORT. THIS RECOMMENDATION, HOWEVER, MIGHT BE OVERRULED BY CONFERENCE.

4. ALTHOUGH WILLESEE DECLINED TO PREDICT HOW CONFERENCE WOULD ACT, HIS MANNER SUGGESTED NEGATIVE OUTCOME. IN SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATION, HIS PRIVATE SECRETARY, GORDON BILNEY, UNDERLINED LIKELIHOOD THAT OMEGA WOULD BE TURNED DOWN DESPITE ALL THE EVIDENCE IN ITS FAVOR.

5. WILLESEE READILY AGREED WITH MY CHARACTERIZATION OF OPPOSITION TO OMEGA AS "DEVOID OF SUBSTANCE AND STEEPED IN PREJUDICE". HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT OMEGA HAD BECOME SYMBOLIC RALLYING GROUND FOR LEFTIST AND ANTI-AMERICAN SENTIMENT. OPPONENTS, INCLUDING SENATOR WHEELDON WHO KNOW MUCH BETTER, PREFERRED TO IGNORE THE FACTS. WILLESEE SHOWED ME A WRITTEN PROPOSAL  
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TY TRANSPORTATION MINISTER JONES THAT OPPOSITION TO OMEGA MIGHT BE DEFUSED IF OMEGA SYSTEM WERE MANAGED BY IMCO RATHER THAN USG. ALTHOUGH WILLESEE PASSED THIS THOUGHT ON, HE DID NOT HIMSELF FIND IT PARTICULARLY VALID.

6. I WAS LEFT WITH IMPRESSION THAT MODERATE ALP LEADERSHIP HAD MORE IMPORTANT DOMESTIC PROBLEMS AND

WERE NOT PREPARED TO MAKE MUCH OF A STAND TO SAVE OMEGA. THEY MAY EVEN FEEL IT IS A LIGHTNING ROD ATTRACTING ALP FIRE AWAY FROM ORE VITAL ISSUES LIKE US FACILITIES IN AUSTRALIA.

7. PRG RECOGNITION. I RAISED RECENT APPEAL ADDRESSED TO PRESIDENT FORD BY ALP PARLIAMENTARIANS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF PARIS AGREEMENTS(CANBERRA 526). I QUOTED EXTRACTS OF THIS STATEMENT AND EMPHASIZED FACTUAL INACCURACIES AND COMPLETELY ONE-SIDED ANTI-AMERICAN TONE OF THE DOCUMENT. I TOLD HIM I WAS AMAZED THAT MANY CABINET MEMBERS --ENDERBY, MORRISON, UREN, MURPHY, AND EVEN BARNARD, IN ADDITION TO CAIRNS--HAD SIGNED SO UNBALANCED A PAPER. WILLESEE SAID NONE OF THE SIGNERS HAD RAISED THE MATTER WITH HIM. HE SOUGHT TO PLAY DOWN ITS IMPORTANCE, SUGGESTING THAT MANY WHO SIGNED WERE UNFAMILIAR WITH THE CONTENTS. AUSTRALIAN RECOGNITION OF PRG WOULD, HOWEVER, BE DEBATED VIGOROUSLY AT THE ALP CONFERENCE. WHITLAM REMAINED FLATLY OPPOSED AND WILLESEE EXPECTED HIS POSITION TO PREVAIL.

8. OTHER ISSUES AT ALP CONFERENCE. WILLESEE SAID THE THIRD FOREIGN POLICY ISSUE AT CONFERENCE AFTER OMEGA AND PRG WOULD BE WITHDRAWAL OF THE TWO AUSTRALIAN TRADE COMMISSIONERS FROM SOUTH AFRICA. HE DID NOT REGARD THIS AS A VERY SUBSTANTIVE MATTER AND DID NOT PREDICT THE OUTCOME. WILLESEE SAID DOMESTIC QUESTIONS WOULD BE PARTICULARLY STATE/FEDERAL RELATIONS.

9. ONE OTHER ITEM LIKELY TO ARISE AT TERRITORIAL CONFERENCE, ACCORDING TO DICK WOOLCOTT OF DFA, CONFIDENTIAL

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IS MIDDLE EAST, INVOLVING AN INVITATION TO PLO TO SEND DELEGATION TO VISIT AUSTRALIA. THIS IS BEING PRESSED BY HARTLEY AND OTHER LEFT-WINGERS BY PM AND WILLESEE ARE OPPOSED. ALSO VEHEMENTLY OPPOSED ARE BOB HAWKE AND JOHN WHEELDON, WHO IS AS PRO-ISRAELI AS HE IS ANTI-OMEGA. GREEN

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** RECOGNITION, PARTY LINE, PROJECT OMEGA, COMMUNIST FRONT ORGANIZATIONS, PARTY MEETINGS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 24 JAN 1975  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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